

Schoenstatt Movement

Australia

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1. Covenant Day Message

"You are our letter"
2 Corinthians 3: 2-3

Dear Schoenstatt Family and Friends,

I wish you many blessings and graces for this
Covenant Day – 18th September.

A couple of days ago, on the 15th of September, we commemorated the death of Fr. Kentenich in 1968. In his address at the funeral, Bishop Tenhumberg described Father Kentenich as a letter of recommendation from God. This phrase became the focus of our spiritual striving for this year, and we have, throughout the year been looking at the life and mission father was given in and through Schoenstatt and which he has now passed on to us. We have been tasked with being his letter of recommendation to others.

One aspect of the life of Father Kentenich that I would like to highlight at this time is that Father Kentenich has always been seen not only as the founder of Schoenstatt, but also the father of our Schoenstatt Family.

During his time of exile in Milwaukee, Father Kentenich was asked which word he would choose to characterise himself. He answered:

"Just one word, Father. The meaning of my life is to be always and only father".

(Fr. Hernan Alessandri, "Only and Always Father", Josef M. Neuenhofer, 2014)

1. Covenant Day Message
2. Come and See
3. A Challenge for Melbourne
4. Mary's role in our lives
5. Home Shrine Blessing
6. Information and Links



In 1935 Father Kentenich celebrated the twenty-fifth jubilee of his ordination. Up until that time he had always kept a low profile and as a rule avoided even being photographed. However, for this jubilee he permitted a celebration to be held on a larger scale than previously to make his family aware of the deep interconnectedness they had with him and among themselves in the Movement.

"To be a community means that the hearts of the members beat as one. If we may say that the Family is marked by a deep community spirit among the members, we must largely attribute it to the fact that most have given their very best to the Family. May I ask each one of you to admit honestly and humbly what you, with your own life's blood, contributed to the life of the Family. If you do not know, I shall gladly tell you privately."

Father Kentenich often referred to the Schoenstatt Work, the Schoenstatt Movement, as a FAMILY. Why? Because he was convinced that in God's eyes, he and his followers were not only members of an apostolic Movement but a **family**. In this faith, he relied on the reality of the covenant they had made and the union of destiny among the members themselves.

In a talk given in Brazil in 1952, Father Kentenich spoke further about this when he said:

"Seen in a supernatural light, we are a real family: I and my followers --- my followers and I. If we are a real family in God's plans, then our destiny is interwoven, our destiny is interconnected in the supernatural sense. Practically speaking, the sacrifices my followers make on my behalf are really for my person; I count on this reality, and it has proven effective. By the same token, the sacrifices I offer on behalf of the Family are a means to save the Family. This is a great security for me."

Schoenstatt has a structure and style of organisation that is family-like. It is made up of many different communities who are autonomous but united in their common mission and their unity in the covenant of love with our MTA in her shrine and with our father.

In a quote in 2014 as part of the preparations for Schoenstatt's Jubilee we read:

"We come from different places, but around the shrine, all our differences are merged into one single family spirit, because we come to a place where we're all children, where the Blessed Mother and our Father are waiting for us".

And we can add, where our father and founder of Schoenstatt is waiting for us.



(Dear Mother Thrice Admirable), the faith of our father and founder inspired you to set up your home in Schoenstatt. In the shadow of this Shrine a family was born, a new spiritual way within the Church, a charism in the midst of our time." *(Part of the prayer in preparation for the Jubilee Celebrations of Schoenstatt's founding in 2014).*

In gratitude for our father and founder, and in union with our Blessed Mother, may we be ever more united in our Covenant of Love and renewed in our mission for Schoenstatt and the Church.

"One Heart in the Father for the Family of God"

United in Covenant loyalty,

Shirley Hall

2. Come and See

On 27th August, the Movement in Western Australia held an event which we named “Come and See” to run over a two-hour period. The event was advertised throughout the Perth Archdiocese as an invitation for interested individuals and families to visit our Shrine and discover the beauty and wonder of Schoenstatt.



Approximately 25 visitors dropped in to have a look and a chat over the afternoon and, luckily, this number exceeded the wonderful movement presenters and helpers on hand. Different activities were organised to run concurrently so that our visitors could experience different aspects of the Schoenstatt Movement.

In the Meeting Room, for small groups, Terry provided a brief introduction to Schoenstatt which included a short video about different aspects of Schoenstatt followed by a witness statement and brief explanation of the Pilgrim

Mother Apostolate. Guil also provided an impromptu and interesting testimony of his time with the Men's Youth from Brazil and their journey to World Youth Day carrying a PMA as they travelled.

Meanwhile, in our Shrine, David was introducing small groups to the symbols and history of the Shrine and bringing awareness of the importance and place of the Shrines within the Schoenstatt way of life.

The Mother Daughter Events Team, Sharne, Monica, Tina, Janelle, and Sr M Luka, set up a table with Schoenstatt brochures and a discussion space for young people, on the grass area in front of the sister's house. Sharne ran a lectio divina session which was attended by young women and mothers, and before the afternoon concluded, had expanded to include a few families as well.

The youth program ended with the young ones engaging in a treasure hunt prepared by Angelique requiring them to locate various people and details of Schoenstatt information around our site.



Philomena prepared a programme to be run in Emilie House for any younger school aged children. About 5 children came and made a small Pilgrim Mother Shrine to take home as well as a colour-in standup picture of Mary, and some word sleuths, which they all enjoyed.

There was also a tea and coffee stand set up with refreshments available and a Piety stall was in place for the sale of various Schoenstatt books, images, and items.

Sr M Thomasine commented;

"I felt blessed by the ones who served and by several people who had truly come and seen! It was the English lady with her Scottish husband. She stayed until the very end and did not seem to get enough of the atmosphere and what she saw and heard.

"Another gift for me was that this Filipino family came to visit the shrine. They lived next to our shrine in the Philippines and did a lot for Schoenstatt until they moved to their only son here in Perth a few years ago.

There were many other blessings and it's good to be aware of them and share them with one another!"

The afternoon concluded around 4.00pm with a brief devotion and prayer session in our Shrine followed by afternoon tea. As this was our first time for this event, we consider it a success and a good source of information and ideas on how we can improve for next time.

Terry Huxtable



3. A Challenge for Melbourne

Update on the Kew Shrine



Through earlier Newsletters, you will know that unfortunately, after more than 71 years, the Schoenstatt Shrine at Kew – the first in Australia – no longer exists as a building. The original MTA picture is now tentatively housed in the Chapel of the Salesian Retreat Centre at Lysterfield on the east side of Melbourne.

The Shrine was blessed on 11th May 1952, by Archbishop Mannix on the property of the Pallottine Fathers' Community, 85 Studley Park Road, Kew. Fr. Kentenich, our Father and Founder, was alive at the time and wrote a letter to the Schoenstatt Family in Melbourne for this occasion. It is a treasured letter of our Australian Schoenstatt Family.

At that time, Schoenstatt belonged to the Pallottines, and the Shrine remained Pallottine property until the property in Kew was sold earlier this year. The property is now a vacant piece of land, no doubt waiting for developers to begin something new.

The Schoenstatt Family in Melbourne is very grateful to the Pallottine Fathers for their generous hospitality in allowing us to visit the Shrine and hold our celebrations there. They also generously gave us the MTA picture and other non-fixtures in the Shrine. We are now grateful to the Salesians at Lysterfield for offering us a place to store everything until we find another solution.

The decision of the Pallottines to sell the property was naturally a blow to us but we firmly trust that our Mother Thrice Admirable will show us the place where she wants to settle in the future. We ask you to pray that negotiations with a parish to have a home for our MTA in a side Chapel in their Church will prove to be successful. At the moment this appears to be an alternative option until Our Lady shows us further plans.

In the meantime, on Covenant Sunday, August 20, we were able to have our annual celebration and renewed sending out of Pilgrim Mother Coordinators at Lysterfield. We had a beautiful day, beginning with a rosary procession around the courtyard of the retreat centre. Fr. Shane Reade SDB enthused us with a homily during Mass in which he challenged us to move out of our comfort Zones, to go beyond the boundaries which tend to keep us safe rather than allowing us to reach out to those with whom we would not necessarily be in contact. We need to remember that everyone belongs to the Church, everyone is our brother or sister, everyone deserves being recognised in the



dignity God gave each one when he created us. Sr. M. Elizabeth, who was visiting from Sydney, was able to refer to this homily as she encouraged us to offer those efforts we make to reach beyond our safe boundaries as contributions to the Capital of Grace.



She further unfolded the challenge Our Lady is giving us at this period in time. With the uncertainty of where we can place her picture and gather as a Schoenstatt Family, we can be sure that our Mother Thrice Admirable is asking us, as she did in the Founding Document to “prove first that you really love me”; “diligently bring me contributions to the Capital of Grace”. We want to do our part “Nothing without us” so that Our Lady will show us where she wants to “dwell among us, distribute graces in abundance, draw youthful hearts to herself and educate them to be instruments in her hands”.

With approximately 70 people present, as the pilgrim mother coordinators were recommissioned, it was clear that if we take our part seriously in filling the Capital of Grace, then Our Lady cannot help but answer our plea to find us the place she has chosen in Melbourne. We invite you to continue praying with us for this intention.

The Schoenstatt Family in Melbourne.



4. Mary's role in our lives

There seems to be many types of people who say they 'know' Mary with many ways of showing this. Some merely say 'Mary is part of my life' but the how is never explained. Others feel close to her because of visits to places she has appeared and only this week I received a bookmark showing the property where people go to honour 'Our Lady of Knock' in Ireland. Asking my friend how it affected her, she brushed it aside with a 'nice place to go' response. It made me think how far apart in thinking and understanding of Mary we were especially seeing how Mary had a great effect on my life as a non-Catholic child but more so having come in contact with Schoenstatt's way of thinking and action, thereby deepening my understanding and relationship with Mary to a fuller and more personal one.

The question came to me: "If you had to explain your relationship with Mary as a Schoenstatter, how would you do it?" Everyone's story is different, but it is worthwhile to explore the answer you might give. Looking at Lumen Gentium Ch. 8 can be a help. It clearly sets out the role of our Blessed Mother in the Church. I would like to add a few thoughts from a Schoenstatt perspective.



When I came to know Schoenstatt Mulgoa, it was an eye opener to find the Mulgoa Shrine as a place of Grace. I see her instrument, Fr. Denis Foley, as introducing me to it. That 'She', was locally attached to the place wasn't hard for me to understand as, similar to the experience of many people, the moment I walked onto the property and into the Shrine I felt 'At Home'. The first grace of three, freely given – and not asked for – because I didn't know (understand) this 'grace' existed until later. An effect we could say my friend from above didn't feel at Knock.

Finding out about the Founding Act of 18 October 1914 in the Original Shrine, and the idea of making a mutual covenant of love with Mary seemed to make so much sense in building on the relationship I had already established with Her. New to me was, if I committed to 'Mary' as Model and Educator', she would be like a true mother to me who would lead me along the right path.

The idea of contributions to a Capital of Grace seemed to resonate as a spiritual and physical task and necessary, rather than the tithing of other denominations. By contributing to the Capital of Grace of the 'Mater Ter Admirabilis' my thoughts ran along the idea that the more contributions I made, the more our Mother could distribute the graces won for us by her Son.

I wasn't a Catholic till I was 23 but had built up a relationship with Mary since I was 8 years old. Since I have not ever been drawn to



any other Marian movements or devotions other than Schoenstatt, it was not hard to see that Schoenstatt's God-willed mission is a chosen work of His and Our Lady as their chosen instrument.



To find a Movement that lauded 'Mariological Teaching', especially the idea of Mary as a Mother and Educator and being trained and formed by her was so... what I was looking for and needed when Fr. Denis came into my life. Until then she had basically been my 'grief counsellor' so to speak – all one way listening – Her to me! Now I found that we could 'work together' to bring her Son anew into the world.

Belief that Mary gives us life, that she is constantly still the Christ-bearer and Christ bringer and all She desires is to give the Saviour to the people anew in every age, is not far-fetched or hard to comprehend when one really studies it and absorbs it.

This thought, which has often been questioned in the course of Schoenstatt's history, really points to the mission of Schoenstatt and therefore our own mission to be Christ-bearers, Christ-bringers for our time.

My question to the doubters of today about the role of Mary would be: 'How else can Christ be born anew in every age if She does not 'birth' him in each one of us? So...

Angela



*Let us walk like you through life,
Let us mirror you forever,
Strong and noble, meek and mild,
Peace and love be our endeavour.
Walk in us through our world.
Make it ready for the Lord. Amen.*

5. Home Shrine Blessing

Saturday 2 September saw the fulfilment of a great longing of Meding and Stewart Davies. For some time, they have been preparing to invite the Blessed Mother into their home and make it a Shrine, just like the Original and Daughter Shrines. Their special day arrived and their Home Shrine was blessed by Fr. Pawel Barszczewski OP in the presence of the members of Meding's Mothers' Group, Mary's Apostles, and Sr. M Elizabeth, who meets monthly with these mothers.



The celebration began with the blessing of the MTA picture which was then carried to the various rooms of the house. The Blessed Mother was invited to make each room her Shrine. Finally, the MTA picture was placed into its prepared place in the home and the celebration continued.

The promise of Our Lady in the First Founding Document was proclaimed: "I shall take my dwelling among you with delight. I shall bestow gifts and graces in abundance, and I shall draw youthful hearts to myself from here and educate them to become useful instruments in my hand."

Being aware that "Our heroic striving and searching for perfection will draw our heavenly Mother to us by gentle force, making this place the abode of her special activity." (First Founding Document) we were reminded of our task in the Covenant:

"Prove first by your deeds that you really love me and that you take your resolution seriously. Do not think that at present in this serious and important time it is something extraordinary if you increase your striving to the highest degree. This sanctification I demand of you. Diligently bring me contributions to the capital of grace. By fulfilling your duties faithfully and conscientiously and through an ardent life of prayer, earn many merits and place them at my disposal."

(First Founding Document)

Meding and Stewart then declared their readiness to surrender themselves anew in the Covenant of Love and prayed their specially formulated Home Shrine Prayer. In this prayer they revealed that they have named their Home Shrine "Conversion". They expressed that the renewal of faith in families requires a continuous conversion of heart, and so they entrusted this task which they cannot manage on their own to their Mother and Educator in the Home Shrine.





All present renewed their Covenant of Love and Fr. Pawel shared with us the very important fact that now the graces which the Blessed Mother intercedes for us in the Original Shrine and the Daughter Shrines are now available in this Home Shrine when we do our part by bringing contributions to the Capital of Grace. This was a powerful moment for all.

Fellowship followed and to end the afternoon the Mothers held their monthly meeting. Our MTA now has a new place from where she wants to help renew the world in Christ.

Mary's Apostles' Group, Bossley Park



6. Information and Links

Shrine Opening Hours

Mulgoa Shrine, NSW. Open daily: 7am – 7.30pm

Mt Richon / Armadale Shrine, WA. Open daily 7am – 7pm.

Please check the websites for updated opening times of the Shrine.

Save the dates

Note for NSW: Foundation Day Celebration changed to 22nd October.

National Conference 21-22 October. Face to face in the States or via Zoom.

Further details available soon.

Links

Official Schoenstatt Website	https://www.schoenstatt.com
Schoenstatt Australian Website	https://www.schoenstatt.org.au
Our YouTube Channel	https://www.youtube.com/schoenstattaustralia
Western Australia Website	https://schoenstattwa.org.au
Schoenstatt Men Website	https://bit.ly/47x72n1

Videos for Covenant Sundays

September	Fr John Evans and the Melbourne Shrine https://www.youtube.com/schoenstattaustralia
August	Sr Bonitas - a life for Schoenstatt in Australia www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEZtqENVKwI
July	Fr. Kentenich, the Priest https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byFwht3W-dw
June	Documentary: Father Joseph Kentenich, A Prophetic Vision www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdTDGLtcJSU

The Sisters singing the consecration prayer may be viewed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O29tXet2DQQ>



Contributions to the Newsletter are welcome

Please send to movtooffice@schoenstatt.org.au by the beginning of each month.